THE LADY'S CHOICE,

A

PETITE PIECE,

OF

TWO ACTS

As it is performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, in *Covent-Garden*.

Ut ameris, amabilis esto.

By PAUL HIFFERNAN, *M. D.*

LONDON:

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[Price One Shilling.]

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Lord EPIGRAM STRAINWIT,	Mr. DYER.
Sir FRANKLY DEBONAIR,	Mr. CLARKE.
Captain BROADSIDE,	Mr. DUNSTAL.
Doctor MATHO,	Mr. SHUTER.

WOMEN.

Mrs. COUNSEL,	Miſs FERGUSON.
Lady PROTEA,	Mrs. GREEN.

SERVANTS, *&c.*

The SCENE in *London.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

HER GRACE,

ELIZABETH,

DUTCHESS of *Hamilton.*

MADAM,

ALTHOUGH *The* LADY'S CHOICE, the Object of ſo much curious Conjecture, before its Appearance to the Public, be but a faint Repreſentation of *That*, Your GRACE has made; it is, however, with Propriety dedicated to Your Patronage, by,

MADAM,

Your moſt reſpectful,

moſt humble, and

moſt obedient Servant,

PAUL HIFFERNAN.

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most obedient Servant,

PAUL HIFFERNAN.

PROLOGUE,

To be ſpoken in the Character of an Univerſity-Man.

By Mr. *SMITH*,

I'VE por'd on th' Antients, till I'm almoſt blind,
But there no Rule for PROLOGUE-WRITING *find.*
PROLOGUES *are moſtly foreign to the Play;*
Than this, more pertinent what can I ſay?
Our Piece, if lik'd: you'll ſee't another Day.
[going.
How! ſpeak no more! rail ſome in Critic Huff——
Why more? what's to the Purpoſe is enuff:
All elſe is circumlocutory Stuff.
Let's not anticipate the Scenes to come;
Actors ſtep forth, and know your AUTHOR's *Doom:*
PROLOGUES *were ſhort in* Athens *and in* Rome.
[going again.
[The following Line is ſpoken as from among the Audience.]
" *A* PROLOGUE, *Friend; don't ſwerve from the old Road.*"
[Returns.
Then, Sirs; ye ſhall have one, and A-la-mode.
[Mimicks the uſual ceremonious Forms obſerved before PROLOGUES, and the affected, pompous Manner of declaiming them.]
The Comic Muſe firſt ſhone in ancient Greece;
Among the Moderns roſe the PETITE PIECE.
While that the former in a larger Space,
Hunts the rife Follies of our headlong Race;
Theſe later Dramas a mid Tenour keep,
Confin'd to Actions of a narr'wer Sweep:
That-when-ek'd-out-to-five-Acts-for-a-Play,
The genuine Spirit's pall'd; it dies away.
Ev'n ſo Arabia's *fragrant Eſſence flows;*
Scatter'd, 'tis weak; collected, charms the Noſe.
All PETITE PIECES *more than Farce require,*
Plan, Diction, Humour, Character, and Fire.
Ah me! if they ſuch Qualities muſt have,
What large Indulgence needs our AUTHOR *crave:*
Who prays, not idly vain, nor void of Fearing,
A cool, uninfluenc'd, a BRITISH *Hearing.*

THE

PROLOGUE.

To be Spoken in the Character of an University-Man.

By Mr. SMITH.

THE LADY's CHOICE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Sir FRANKLY DEBONAIR *riſes from his Bureau, where he had been writing a Letter,— his Valet in Waiting at a Diſtance.*

WELL; we laughing, high-ſpirited Gentlemen who affect a Superiority over the Paſſions, and particularly LOVE, are the moſt aukward when actuated thereby, and the moſt diſtreſſed how to proceed.

With a lively and frolickſome young Lady I have laughed myſelf into a ſerious Inclination. Whatever Way I made any Advances to her, whether in a grave, or gay Humour, ſhe ſeized the Key, quick as Camœleons are tinged with the Colours of neighbouring Bodies; and the Debate has commonly terminated to her Advantage.

By frequent Hints dropped from her, I thought I had Reaſon to believe, that I was the Object of her Affection; but when I plumed myſelf moſt with that flattering Preſumption, a diſcouraging Laugh blaſted all Hopes. I have

counter-practiſed the ſame Fineſſe with her; by ſometimes piteouſly declaring, that the little God had pierced me through and through. But, on obſerving her grown ſerious at the Confeſſion, and Bluſhes conſcious of a Triumph mantling in her Cheeks, I have broke into an unexpected Laugh; at which ſhe departed full of Indignation.

How ſhe is I know not;—but that I am in for it, is beyond all Manner of Doubt. Not having ſeen her for ſome Time at her uſual Place of viſiting, has thrown me into a Kind of Melancholy.—In what Manner to break my Paſſion to her is now the Queſtion; having but a a ſhort Time to ſtay in Town, being obliged to attend my Election in the Country. I am, beſides, apprehenſive, that piqued at my never having made any deciſive Declaration to her, ſhe may marry one of thoſe original Wooers, ſhe has often painted in a very whimſical Light.

If I write my Situation to her, ſhe may divulge it, to feed her own Vanity; which would mortify my Pride to the laſt Degree.——A female Go-between? No: that is as ſecret as a Town-Crier.——What were beſt?——Send this Letter I have wrote, ſimply propoſing a *Tete a Tete* to her, about Buſineſs of Conſequence; then make a fair Declaration of Love: which, if ſlighted, I can after deny with all faſhionable Effrontery. It is reſolved.——Here, *Trueman*, go directly with this Billet and deliver it to Lady PROTEA: whilſt I to the Coffee-houſe to read the Papers. Thither do you ſend me Notice of your Return.

VALET.

I ſhall, Sir. [*Exit.*

DEBONAIR.

This Fellow's Secrecy I can depend on, having experienced his Fidelity and Addreſs through *Europe*. Any of my Livery I could not truſt with this Affair; which they would certainly blab to ſome Lady's Maid of their Intimates: and ſhe, in Duty bound, would tell her Miſtreſs, who, from a benevolent Spirit, would immediately communicate it through the whole Circle of her Ac-

Acquaintance; ſo that in the Evening it would be the Talk of both Theatres and the Opera-Houſe. But the Die is thrown; and the Caſt muſt now turn up either for Matrimony, or a philoſophical Retreat to the Country.

[*Exit.*

SCENE.

Lady PROTEA's *Apartment.*

Lady PROTEA, *Mrs.* COUNSEL.

COUNSEL.

By all the Charms of female Curioſity, I conjure you, tell me what diſquiets your Ladyſhip.

PROTEA.

O—Mrs. Counsel, I have never been ſo frightened in my Life before.

COUNSEL.

By what?

PROTEA.

A Dream of moſt ominous Portent.

COUNSEL.

How ſo?

PROTEA.

Gueſs.

COUNSEL.

Have you dreamt the Death of your deareſt Friend?

PROTEA.

No.

COUNSEL.

That your *Dreſden*-China was all deſtroyed?

PROTEA.

No.

COUNSEL.

That your Fortune was embezzled?

PROTEA.

No; worſe than all that.

COUNSEL.

What worſe can be?

PROTEA.

What worſe? O—Mrs. COUNSEL, unleſs I reſolve on Matrimony within four and twenty Hours. I dreamt, (tormenting Thought) that I muſt die a Maid.

COUNSEL.

It ſeems then, Lady PROTEA would not willingly die a Maid.

PROTEA.

Not for any Conſideration. Beſides our being by ſocial, as well as religious Duty, bound to anſwer the great Ends of Providence; how aukward muſt I look, when aſked by any of the grave Matrons in the *Elyſian* Shades how Matters go forward among Mortals now. Unable to inform them, I ſhould certainly be excluded as one unworthy of their profound Converſations; and be doomed to aſſociate with the raw and unexperienced Souls of Boarding-School Miſſes. The very Apprehenſion chills me.

COUNSEL.

COUNSEL.

To prevent in your Senſe ſo terrible a Misfortune, what does your Ladyſhip propoſe?

PROTEA.

I am determined, call it romantic Flight, or what you will, that whoever of my Suitors, (they are all to viſit here this Morning) pleaſe me moſt, ſhall be my wedded, or at leaſt contracted Lord ere Night. For I would not be expoſed to the Repetition of ſo terrifying an Alarm, though in Recompence, I were to die a Maiden Queen.

[*Sings.*]

To die a Maid;
I am afraid:
In Bloom of Life 'twere ſuch Diſgrace.
O pity then my cruel Caſe.
I have the Men ſo long coquetted;
Now in my Turn I'm juſtly fretted.
But this I'm reſolv'd on;
That ere I go
'Mongſt Wives below,
I'll learn what here they've done.

COUNSEL.

Aſſured of the Certainty of finding you at Home; your Admirers will devoutly attend.

PROTEA.

So oppoſite a Set they are, they may juſtly be called *The Contraſts.* However, there is one, whoſe Character I have long revered; and Addreſſes lately received at Lady *Rulemode*'s—which, if he had followed!——In all he ſays or does, there breathes ſuch a manly Sweetneſs, commanding Decency, perſuaſive Elegance, and winning Reſolution—that——

Enter

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Captain BROADSIDE waits on your Ladyſhip.

PROTEA.

Shew him up. *(Exit Servant)* Though of the Navy the Captain is of a very good Family. He has the Character of a bold Seaman; but is a meer Blank in every Thing elſe. I muſt vary my Temper to play off each of my moſt extraordinary Lovers. This Salt-water Hero makes Love like bluſtering *Æolus*, and ſtrides in a Lady's Chamber, like HOMER's *Neptune* in the Sea.

Enter Captain BROADSIDE.

BROADSIDE.

I am come to make my laſt Propoſal, Madam; which is, to be either made this Day happy, in being ſole Poſſeſſor of ſo lovely a Prize; or, bulged on a Refuſal to never ſee you more.

PROTEA.

Why in ſo violent a Hurry, good Captain?

BROADSIDE.

Becauſe we are in Hopes of receiving immediate Orders to ſail in Queſt of the Enemy; and, if the Chance of War ſhould put an End to a *True Briton*'s Life, that my Fortune may add an Affluence to your's, who appear to me the moſt deſerving of your Sex.—— What I ſay, I think: It is the Language of Sincerity, unvarniſhed with the Flouriſhing of Court-Flattery.

PROTEA.

Gratitude exacts my Thanks, though Love be his Adverſary. Plain, rough Integrity is but a weak Recommendation to one whoſe chief Reliſh is for a Delicacy of Taſte,

Taſte, Manners, and Converſation. He is not predeſtined for me, that is certain.

[*Aſide to* COUNSEL.

BROADSIDE.

Well, Lady fair, what Anſwer do you make?

PROTEA.

Have you performed the Conditions on which you were to have me?

BROADSIDE.

What Conditions?

PROTEA.

Have you been at any of the Academies for grown-up People, to learn to come gracefully into a Room, and poliſh your Manners? In ſhort, have you learned to dance?

BROADSIDE.

I am aſtoniſhed at the Incomprehenſibility of your Meaning.

PROTEA.

My Meaning is, that I have made a Vow, never to marry a Man, who cannot moſt elegantly dance.

[*She dances*; Broadſide *looks on her with Amazement.*

BROADSIDE.

Why, Zounds, Madam—there is no being patient at ſuch Treatment.—Do you doubt my Loyalty to his Majeſty? my Zeal for my Country? do you take me to be a *Jacobite?* or a Spy for the *French* King? Dance quoth-a!

PROTEA.

Yes, dance; that's the Condition.

[*She dances again.*

BROAD-

BROADSIDE.

I am of Opinion no Man is excuſable for Dancing, but when drunk—and in Truth what ſo like Drunkenneſs as Dancing? Your reel-about Minuet formed on the Figure of Eight, reſembles pretty near a drunken Man tacking this Way and that in the Street; or a Ship broke looſe from her Cables, when without Direction from the Helm ſhe zig-zags along.—As for your Contre Dances, when I ſee the up-and-down Hurry of a Crew of powdered Heads, I don't know what to compare them to, but to white curl'd *Breakers* chacing each other upon *Shallows*.

PROTEA.

Your profane Compariſons againſt my favourite Pleaſure affront me.

BROADSIDE.

I am ſorry for it; yet ſhould I for that be rejected: I cannot help wiſhing, that when your Ladyſhip ſhall venture on the married ſtate, you may join with a Man of as much Honour. Let me tell you, you will find none ſuch among the trim Sparks of the Court. Their inconſtant Hearts veer about to every Point of the Compaſs, never fixed by the Stays of Truth, and mutual Love—But what of that? they can dance!

[*Knocking at the Street-Door.*

PROTEA.

What violent Knocking! Step down Mrs. COUNSEL, and know who it is. (*Exit* COUNSEL.) And you Captain take a Turn in the Garden. As ſoon as this Viſitor ſhall be gone, I will give you your final Anſwer, after a mature Conſideration on the Propoſal you have made.

BROADSIDE.

Madam, I obey; and ſhall wait your Signal to bring to—I ſay dance, with a Vengeance.

[*Exit.*

Enter

Enter Mrs. COUNSEL.

COUNSEL.

It is Lord EPIGRAM STRAINWIT's Servant, who rapped ſo violently. His Lordſhip waits in his Chair to know if he can have the Honour of ſeeing you this Morning.

PROTEA.

Admit him. (*Exit* COUNSEL.) Another of my Wooers —Lord EPIGRAM STRAINWIT, a Beau, and a Wit, neither young nor old—has ſome Parts, but moſt conſummate Vanity—affects to know all Things, ignorant of moſt—pretends to make Love that fine Things may be retorted—pays Viſits, not ſo much to ſee others, as to ſhew himſelf.

Enter COUNSEL, *ſhewing in Lord* EPIGRAM STRINWIT.

STRAINWIT.

May I live in perpetual Diſpleaſure with the nine Muſes, be abhorred by the three Graces, and for ever eraſed out of *Apollo*'s Regiſtry of the truly Ingenious, but you are irreſiſtibly charming this Morning. By all my happy Thoughts, and witty Sayings, you are. Your Eyes look Creation. Your Features diffuſe Immenſity of Raptures all around.

PROTEA.

My good Lord have Mercy on your humble Servant.

STRAINWIT.

May I labour in a total Eclipſe of Underſtanding, if I have ſaid any thing but the Truth.

PROTEA.

A Ceſſation of Compliments I entreat. Has your Lordſhip been at the Houſe lately?

STRAINWIT.

Which Houſe, Madam? The Opera Houſe, or that of *Covent* Garden, or *Drury-Lane?*

PROTEA.

No, my Lord: I mean the Parliament Houſe.

STRAINWIT.

The Parliament Houſe! pooh—I go thither now and then, to ſee what they are a doing; but little is the Allurement there for a brilliant Imagination. Nothing is to be heard but dry conſtitutional Debates; which I ſeldom, or rather never indeed trouble my Head about. We Men of Taſte have more eſſential Things to mind; Aſſemblies, Maſquerades, Plays, and Operas.

[*Sings an* Italian *Air.*

PROTEA.

Ceaſe your Quavering, my Lord, and tell me what News in the political World.

STRAINWIT.

Politics I deteſt. Let us turn to my darling Subject, Love. How ſoon ſhall I be univerſally envied for being the Lord of ſo much much Wit and Beauty as your Ladyſhip poſſeſſeth.

PROTEA.

As ſoon as you, my Lord, can make a Vow to be a conſtant Huſband; but that I dare not hope, when I reflect on the many rival Beauties that would ſolicit your Infidelity, in order to thwart my ſuperior Happineſs. Can you promiſe, my Lord?

STRAIN-

STRAINWIT.

Upon my Soul, Lady PROTEA, that is a nice Queſtion you have put to me. Let me conſider—In ſtrict Honour I cannot make ſuch a Promiſe——No one can foreſee how powerful Temptations may prove. And the dear Rogues ſo perſecute me; O how they do perſecute me!

PROTEA.

Ah me! Deſpair muſt be my Lot.

STRAINWIT.

Why Deſpair? We may compound Matters.

PROTEA.

Compound Matters! I am of a jealous Nature, and will not compound to yield a Tittle of my Right.

STRAINWIT.

That is very churliſh, and underbred.

PROTEA.

That Reply is inſolent and unbecoming of a Peer. I hope you will not plead your Privilege for being unmannerly to a Woman?

STRAINWIT.

Lord, Madam, do not huff ſo. The Violence of your Voice has cauſed a Brainquake in my Head, and quite diſjointed a Stanza I had juſt compoſed. Pray Silence, one Moment, that I may try if I can recover, or juſtle it together again. O——I have it.

Without Feeling Love I ſing,
Cupid always on the Wing;
Without Love there is no Pleaſure,
Love is Beauty's darling Treaſure:
On that Paſſion I refine,
Envy owns SHEERWIT *is mine.*

PROTEA.

It is very complaiſant of Envy.

STRAINWIT.

Your Ladyſhip may call it Complaiſance, or what you pleaſe; but in my Senſe, it is only bare Juſtice to Truth. ——Lady PROTEA, are not you in Raptures with theſe Lines?

PROTEA.

Not I indeed. Their Meaning is as impertinent, as their Verſification is hobbling; in my Opinion.

STRAINWIT.

Your Opinion, Madam! I never repeat my Conceits to you, or any of your Sex, but for your Admiration. As to Opinion, tho' but the Baſtard Child of Judgment, you have none. Thus you vainly conſtrue our merely civil Addreſſes into a Love for your Perſons. But know, Madam, that when we profeſſedly ſigh for a celebrated Toaſt, it is but to indulge our own Vanity, not that we feel the leaſt; for we Wits, like you Coquets, love none but ourſelves.

PROTEA.

Pray have you any more civil Things to ſay? But leſt the Impetuoſity of your Wit ſhould mortgage your Judgment beyond all Hopes of a Recovery, walk a while in the Garden, in order to recall departed Senſe and Manners to your Aſſiſtance; then you ſhall hear my concluſive Anſwer you have ſo long petitioned for.

STRAINWIT.

When Beauty orders, Genius muſt obey.——
Without Feeling, &c.

[*Exit.*

PROTEA.

PROTEA.

Wait on his Lordſhip. (*Exit* COUNSEL) What a ridiculous, ſelf-loving Animal it is.—To him and many ſuch titled Coxcombs may be applied the Saying of an ingenious Friend of mine: They are Wits among Lords, and Lords among Wits. What a Pity it is, that Men of true Merit are often compelled by a ſcanty Situation to pay Court to, and dance Attendance after their Unworthineſs.

[*Exit.*

SCENE.

The GARDEN.,

Enter BROADSIDE.

BROADSIDE. (*Sings*)

Now ALBION'*s Flag with Glory reigns*
Triumphant o'er the ſubject Waves;
No free-born Tar of Toil complains,
To ſcourge vain GALLIA'*s haughty Slaves.*

Enter on the oppoſite Side Lord EPIGRAM STRAINWIT.

BROADSIDE.

What ſkipping Blade is this bears down upon me? Becauſe he dances his Steps along, I have already a fixed Hatred for him.——Ho, Sir; what Cheer?

STRAINWIT.

By the Bluntneſs of his Salute, lengthy Sword, and other Accoutrements, this muſt be a Sea-Officer: (*Aſide*)

But

But to rectify his Miſtake, and find out who he is;—— Sir, Lord EPIGRAM STRAINWIT is the moſt obedient, humble Servant of?

BROADSIDE.

DREADNOUGHT BROADSIDE, a Captain of the Navy. Thank Heaven, I am not aſhamed of the one, and his Majeſty, that I glory in, the other. I do not remember, my Lord, that I have ever ſeen any of your Name upon our Liſt of Officers.

STRAINWIT.

No, Captain; for we being of delicate Conſtitutions, are hereditary Retainers to the Muſe.

BROADSIDE.

A Courtier this, and a Placeman. *(Aſide)* I have often heard, that there are very good Poſts about the King's Mews; and, for aught I know to the contrary, your Lordſhip may be his Maſter of Horſe.

STRAINWIT.

O the Sea-Gull.— One may make this Fellow ſwallow any Thing out of the Latitude of his Profeſſion. *(Aſide)* Captain, have you heard the News of this Morning, which has alarmed the Court and City?

BROADSIDE.

Not I: What is it, pray?

STRAINWIT.

That our Enemies have entrenched themſelves on the narrow Paſs of *Panmenmaur*, a Mountain in *Wales*, to cut off all Communication betwixt *England* and *Ireland*; and that the *Welch*, in Order to diſlodge them, throw Goats and Stones down on them pell-mell; as *Jupiter*, in the Poets, uſed from high Mountains to pelt poor Mortals with Thunderbolts.

BROAD-

BROADSIDE.

I wiſh them Succeſs. There muſt be Treachery ſome where in our Navy, that there has not been a better Look out, to prevent their Landing. Notwithſtanding his News, from the Diſlike I have conceived for this dancing Fop, I cannot help daſhing him a Hummer; I'll do't.

STRAINWIT.

How profoundly he meditates on my Fib; is, perhaps, laying Schemes to go and annoy the Enemy with his Ship.

BROADSIDE.

My Lord, one good Turn deſerves another: As I came hither from the Admiralty, I left them in the greateſt Joy imaginable.

STRAINWIT.

At what?

BROADSIDE.

At an Expreſs juſt arrived from *Gibraltar*, which informs us, that there has been a bloody Engagement between the Enemy's Fleet and ours, in the Lake of *Geneva*; that we have burned and ſunk many of their Ships; taken more: and when the Courier came off, were purſuing the reſt through the Canal of *Languedoc*, to the Gulph of *Lyons*.

STRAINWIT.

By this Succeſs then, we have cleared the *Archipelago*; ſecured it's Trade to ourſelves; and ſhall henceforwards compel the *French* to keep their Ships at Home, Landlocked at *Touloufe*.

BROADSIDE. *(Aſide)*

Toulon, the Puppy would ſay. This is a good one, and how eagerly ſwallowed by my Land Gudgeon! I cannot

not have Patience to converſe any longer with him; ſo I will even ſheer off, and bear down yon Walk.

STRAINWIT.

Notwithſtanding I am obliged to him for his News, he ſmells ſo ſtrong of Tar, that, to relieve my Noſe from his offenſive Effluvia, I muſt repair to yon ſweet-ſcented Shrubs.

Adieu, Captain; he ſtinks. . . . . [*Exit.*

BROADSIDE.

. . . . . Servant, my Lord.
My Fingers itch to lace him with a Cord.

(*Exit.*

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

Lady PROTEA's *Apartment.*

Lady PROTEA, *Mrs.* COUNSEL.

COUNSEL.

MADAM, your learned Admirer is come: he now deſcends from his roomy Coach, ſo enlarged, that he may not be ſtinted of a ſufficient Quantity of Air for the due and laudable Œconomy of his Lungs; being under a Neceſſity of keeping the Windows ſhut to conceal his whimſical Dreſs, half antique, half modern; which hath acquired to him the Title of the odd Gentleman in Maſquerade. Your Ladyſhip is the only modern Being he has any Reliſh for.

PROTEA.

Doctor MATHO?

COUNSEL.

The ſame.

PROTEA.

This very extraordinary Being, Doctor MATHO, is the Abridgment of our two Univerſities, *Greſham*, and all other Colleges. That a Man born to a plentiful Fortune ſhould diſqualify himſelf for the faſhionable Elegancies of Life, by traveſtying his Perſon into an Antique Abſurdity! He expects great Reverence on Account of his extenſive Knowledge;—but, *ecce Homo*—here he comes.

Enter Doctor MATHO.

MATHO.

The *Greeks* and *Romans* uſed not to ſalute by the Depoſition of this triangular, Gothick Invention——a Hat.

PROTEA.

Not being inſtructed how the Ladies of *Greece* and *Rome* uſed to ſalute, you will condeſcend I hope to be ſatisfied with our modern Method of a Curtſy.

MATHO.

To be ſure, Madam; and by all the Rules of Analogy.

PROTEA.

Mrs. COUNSEL, ſee whence that Noiſe.

[*A Noiſe is heard.*

COUNSEL.

The Monkey, got into his wicked Frolicks, has made in one of your Ladyſhip's Gowns a moſt wicked *Rent*.

MATHO.

Rent! What a ſtarved and barren Sound is that! Monoſyllables are the Diſgrace of our Language. Thrice happy Ancients, particularly the *Greeks*.——Your Words only echo the Senſe.——For Inſtance, thus they expreſs I have made a Rent——*Kekraka*.——There is a Word!

PROTEA.

The Ungreekiſied would think you ſwore in it.

COUNSEL.

I vow, Madam, I ſhould incline to think, from it's craſhing Noiſe, that it ſignifies a Nut-cracker.

MATHO.

MATHO.

Groſs Ignorance! hold your Tongue.——To prove their Superiority over us, I can produce many Paſſages from the *Greeks*; and ſome too from the *Latins*.

PROTEA.

I pray you may not, Sir. It is monſtrous that ye learned Gentry can never ſpeak but by Quotation; as *Cicero* ſaid this, and *Plato* that; which is no Proof of Senſe, but Memory. Your Diſcourſe in general is mere Patch-Work. For my Part I would always chuſe leſs of the *Roman* or *Greek*; but more of the *Engliſhman*.

MATHO.

Then, Madam, by this Declaration, you prefer the *Moderns* to the *Antients*.

PROTEA.

I do——how much ſoever you may eſteem them. For all the *Antients*, in my Senſe of Things, are not worth one living *Modern*.

MATHO.

The *Moderns*, Madam, it muſt be owned, have their Share of Merit; and many have been their Improvements in Natural Philoſophy.——In our laſt Converſation I gave you a general View of their new Syſtems of the World; and in explaining the vorticular Hypotheſis, I obſerved to your Ladyſhip, by way of an illuſtrating Similarity, that my Affections were twirled about in the *Vortex* of your Charms.

PROTEA.

I a *Vortex!* I twirl Things about! What does your Doctorſhip mean? I ſuppoſe, Sir, like ſome philoſophical Coxcombs, you think Women have not Souls; would degrade us into meer Machines. Do all your Love-Proteſtations amount but to this, that I am debaſed into a Whirl-gig? Grant me Patience, Heaven!

COUNSEL.

Never has our Sex been ſo wickedly abuſed, (*Weeps.*) O fie, Sir.

MATHO.

Here am I in a bleſſed Situation between two female Volcanos, eructing Flame, Sulphur, and Indignation at me.

COUNSEL.

I proteſt, Sir, you are vaſtly rude to provoke my Lady into ſuch a Violence of Temper.

MATHO.

Peace exotic.——After the Storm comes a Calm.——Odſo, I muſt mollify her, and in the claſſical Way too.——Divine *Amaryllis* look not thus frowningly on, your faithful, wounded, ſighing *Corydon*; by whom the Circle of your Arms is preferred to the Encyclopedy of Arts and Sciences: and the ſnowy Allurements of your Neck and Boſom to the milky Way.

PROTEA.

Can you forſake the Stars for me?

MATHO.

Intermittently, I can——entirely——no.

PROTEA.

No! Why then, I declare I will ſuffer no Rival in the Affections of the Man I wed.——I ſhould never bear the Thought of my Huſband's riſing from me in cold Winter Nights, to clamber to an Obſervatory on the Top of the Houſe; there freeze in Admiration of the regardleſs Beauties of the Sky. Then I, forſaken Spouſe, impelled by conjugal Duty, as well as Love, muſt quit my warm Bed, and in a looſely huddled on Robe, aſcend to envelop therein my congealed, and heedleſs Dear; warm and thaw

him

him to Humanity again. But in ſo doing, what frequent Colds muſt I be expoſed to?

MATHO.

Kind Creature!

COUNSEL.

Ay, conſider that, Sir.——Pretty Pretenſions truly to court young Ladies with, as if they wanted nothing but aſtronomical Inſtruments; all which I will poſitively break; next fling your *Greek* and *Latin* Books into the Fire: then ſee if they throw up a brighter Flame than our *Engliſh* Volumes can.

MATHO.

Will you ſo, *Viſigoth*, born Enemy to Knowledge and polite Literature? Madam, do you encourage this ſhe-*Vandal*'s Inſolence? Do you join in hoſtile Conſpiracy againſt the *Arts* and *Sciences?*

PROTEA.

Againſt too great a Superſtition for them I declare; ſince I daily ſee ſuch bad Effects: which are, to render your Fraternity a moſt conceitedly-aukward Set of Mortals. Mix more with Society, in order to become tolerable. The ſtiff Univerſity Habit cannot be ſhook off at once.—— Therefore when you make an Inroad into the *Beau Monde*, failing of it's Manners you fall to abuſing it; then hurry back to your College Dens; there affect Singularity of Behaviour or Dreſs; and laviſhly praiſe the Deceaſed of Antiquity, becauſe incapable of figuring in our polite Aſſemblies.

COUNSEL.

Bravo——Madam——Bravo.

MATHO.

Tutelary Gods of *Greece* and *Rome*, how ſacred Antiquity is here profaned thro' me by her irreverent Ladyſhip—and yet one can no more help admiring ſuch pretty Trifles than

than a beautiful Fly, or a neatly tinctured Tulip; they are alike fluttering and gaudy.——But in Spite of Philoſophy my Blood is rouzed.——Therefore, Madam, Madam, I demand a categorical Anſwer.—— Are you diſpoſed to be my legal and ratified Companion for Life?

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Madam, a Perſon, who appears to be a Valet de Chambre; has a Letter, which he ſays he has particular Orders to deliver into no Hands, but your Ladyſhip's.

PROTEA.

COUNSEL, go perſonate me, and receive the Letter, leſt there be any Charm in it.

COUNSEL.

I am Charm Proof.

[*Exit* COUNSEL *and* SERVANT.

PROTEA.

That I may diſpatch an Anſwer to this Letter, whatever it's Import be, and have alſo Time to reflect on the categorical Anſwer you demand, be pleaſed to amuſe yourſelf awhile in the Garden. You will ſee, perhaps, a Relation or two of mine there; but you need not take any Notice of them.

MATHO.

I ſhall not, Madam; but will excite gay Thoughts with my conſtant Companion, a Pocket *Anacreon*; his Sentiments and mine tally ſo exactly:

With flow'ry Wreaths my Head entwine,
Gods give me Women, give me Wine.

[*Exit.*

Enter

Enter COUNSEL.

COUNSEL.

Here is the Letter, Madam.——The Valet bowed moſt reſpectfully as he delivered it. By the Tingling of my Fingers, I believe there is a Charm in it.

PROTEA.

(*Reads.*) Who waits there? (*Enter* SERVANT.) Tell the Bearer of this Letter I ſhall be at Home. (*Exit* SERVANT.) Whom think you it is from?

COUNSEL.

I cannot ſay.

PROTEA.

From the very Gentleman I have been ſo taken with at Lady *Rulemode*'s. My other Suppliants I hold cheap, but to receive Sir FRANKLY DEBONAIR, who is an acknowledged Connoiſſeur of polite and elegant Life, I muſt go and have every thing ranged in Taſte.——Thy Aſſiſtance, COUNSEL, will be wanted.

COUNSEL.

It is always at your Ladyſhip's Diſpoſal.

PROTEA.

Come, dear Sir FRANKLY, to complete my Vow—free me from the Terrors of my Dream, and the Perſecution of thoſe odious Admirers

By whom I've been for ſix long Months purſued!
Was ever Nymph by three ſuch Mortals wooed?

[*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE *changes to the Garden.*

Enter MATHO, *with ſome Flowers in his Hand.*

MATHO.

Theſe Flowers are of exquiſite Odour, and moſt beautifully ſtreaked! How wonderful is Nature in the Variety of her Delineations!——I vow a ſalubrious Air breathes in this Garden. It is an abſolute Country in the Town. By it's Situation and Extent it is well fitted for Speculation. What Terror-looking Wight comes this Way? Some military Relation of her Ladyſhip, I ſuppoſe.

Enter BROADSIDE.

BROADSIDE.

A very oddly dreſſed Gentleman this,——belike a Traveller in ſome far diſtant Parts; and what he wears, the Garb of the Country he is come from. *(Aſide.)* However, as he is a good, ſober-countenanced Gentleman, I have no Diſlike to converſe with him. Pray, Sir, what is the News of the Day?

MATHO.

None, that I know of, Sir.

BROADSIDE.

None! that is very ſtrange. I have been informed not long ſince, that our Enemies had entrenched themſelves at the narrow Paſs of *Panmenmaur*, and——

MATHO.

Whoever told you ſo, meant to play on you.

BROADSIDE.

Play on me? Blood, Sir, take care of what you ſay.

MATHO.

MATHO.

He might as well have told you, that they were entrenched on the Top of the Monument. The one is as practicable as the other.

BROADSIDE.

Might he ſo? Then I have been impoſed on, it ſeems. ——The Raſcal is ſomewhere in the Garden. By the Honour of our Flag, I will give inſtant Chace, *(draws)* grapple with, and have the Scoundrel Keel-haled.

[*Exit.*

MATHO.

I fear I ſhall be the innocent Cauſe of Miſchief.—— What glittering Spark have we here? He lightly bounds to his own Muſick.——But for her Ladyſhip's good Senſe, I ſhould ſuſpect him to be a Lover of her's.

Enter Lord EPIGRAM STRAINWIT.

STRAINWIT.

In the Name of *Tragi-Comedy* what burleſque Figure is this? It has the formal priggiſh Look of a Royal-Society *Virtuoſo*. I ſhall ſmoke him in a Minute or two's Converſation. I honour his Buſkins, and the uncooth Equipment of his groteſque Perſon. *(Aſide.)* Sir, this is a very pleaſant Garden, and a beautiful Image of the Poſſeſſor's Mind.

MATHO.

Adequately ſo.

STRAINWIT.

Adequately ſo.——*(Mimicking him aſide.)* Pray, Sir, have you heard of the extraordinary Succeſs of our Fleet?

MATHO.

No, Sir; but ſhall be glad to hear it from you.

STRAINWIT.

The Enemy's Fleet and ours engaged in the Lake of *Geneva*.

MATHO.

Ha, ha, ha,—— Why, Sir, as you are a Gentleman.

STRAINWIT.

What do you laugh at, Sir? I am more than a Gentleman.

MATHO.

And leſs, perhaps.

STRAINWIT.

I am a Peer; Lord EPIGRAM STRAINWIT.

MATHO.

The Hackney *Bon-Mot* Man, and Sonneteer of the Court. *(Aſide)* Then, my Lord, ſince you have made your Title known, learn from Doctor MATHO.

STRAINWIT.

This is the whimſical Antiquarian; the univerſally learned Thing I have heard ſo much of. *(Aſide)* Well, Sir; what am I to learn from Doctor MATHO?

MATHO.

That the Lake of *Geneva* is in the Middle of Lands; that no Ships of War ever engaged thereon; that this is a Story calculated to render you ridiculous by repeating it.

STRAIN-

STRAINWIT.

Enough, enough, good Doctor MATHO. There is no Need for ſo long a Comment.—I am almoſt choaked with Reſentment,——I kindle into Rage,——I will ſet Fire to the vile Tarpawling. I hope he has not left the Precincts of the Garden. I will ferret him out Sword in Hand; *(draws)* ſhould he refuſe me immediate Satisfaction: I will complain to our Houſe, and have his Commiſſion taken from him.

[*Exit.*

MATHO.

If ſetting Fools right, be like to produce ſo much Harm; henceforward let the World be immerſed in, and grow fond of Errour for MATHO. But as I have without any malicious Intention, raiſed a Storm here, it is proper, in Regard to myſelf and the Lady, that I endeavour to lay it; as well as to prevent dangerous and homicide Conſequences. I muſt find out theſe Death-menacing Antagoniſts.—Come forth, Peace-maker; (*draws*) come forth my honeſt Sword, fabricated from the dear Remains of brave *Achilles'* Spear: in Honour of whom I moſt devoutly kiſs thee.——I ſmack on it the genuine Ruſt, the true *Green* of Antiquity!

O let me kiſs thee o'er and o'er;—ſo! ſo! ſo!
Thy Touch alone would dub a Virtuoſo.

[*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to a Chamber.*

Lady PROTEA, *Mrs.* COUNSEL.

PROTEA.

What elegant Equipage is that drove up to the Door?

COUNSEL.

I hear the Servant coming to tell your Ladyſhip.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Madam, Sir FRANKLY DEBONAIR.

PROTEA.

Order him Admittance; and obſerve, I am not at Home for any Viſiter more. (*Exit Servant*) Sir FRANKLY's Coming has thrown me into a little Flurry—but it is now over.

COUNSEL.

Not quite, I would bet my Chaſtity.——O Nature, Nature, this is one of thy ſympathetic Strokes of Hearts in Uniſon with each other.——I will ſteer my Politicks accordingly. [*Aſide.*

Enter Sir FRANKLY DEBONAIR.

DEBONAIR.

Madam, ſince I had the Happineſs (I may add without Flattery, the greateſt in my Life) of a few Interviews with you at Lady *Rulemode*'s; I have long ſighed for a concluſive one, relative to what I hinted to you there, half Joke, half Earneſt; but have in vain, to the no ſmall Excitement of their Curioſity, gone often thither ſince, in Hopes of meeting you; but was not ſo fortunate. I avoided making any particular Enquiry after you left ſhe and her very inquiſitive Aſſembly, ſhould in ſolemn Debate pronounce; there is ſomething to be ſure in the Wind; and Time cannot keep a Secret.

PROTEA.

It is ſtrange, Sir FRANKLY, as you juſtly obſerve, that Perſons of different Sexes cannot cultivate an honourable Acquaintance, without being liable to impertinent Explications.

DEBONAIR.

Madam, reſolved to pay no more Attendance to Chance, I come to you thus unheralded; and hope your Ladyſhip will pardon the Intruſion.

PROTEA.

Sir FRANKLY DEBONAIR's Character for his celebrated good Qualities is a Paſſport for him to the moſt prudiſh, to the moſt delicate *Ruelles*: Nay, his Viſits are eſteemed as an Honour reflected on thoſe to whom addreſſed.

DEBONAIR.

Madam, you have almoſt put me to a Lady's Confuſion.

PROTEA.

In what I have ſaid I am but an Echo of the Publick.

DEBONAIR.

Urgent Affairs demanding my ſpeedy Departure from *London*, I could no longer wait for a caſual Opportunity of ſeeing you; nor can at preſent laviſh a too precious Time, in the idle Round of faſhionable Dialogue; and therefore, inform your Ladyſhip, that I am come to treat and conclude with you on a Subject of the laſt Importance.

PROTEA.

A Subject of the laſt Importance with me, Sir FRANKLY!

DEBONAIR.

What I have to propoſe is of ſo tender a Nature; that I think there is one too many in the Room to hear it.

PROTEA.

Nothing is ever propoſed to me but in the Preſence of this Gentlewoman, Mrs. COUNSEL; my conſtant Companion, and faithful Guide from my Infancy.

COUNSEL.

COUNSEL.

You may rely on me, Sir; I am a Woman of Honour.

DEBONAIR.

Let then my ready Confidence inſure your Friendſhip me.

COUNSEL.

Sir FRANKLY, I am unaccountably warped in your Behalf.

PROTEA.

Say you ſo? then I am in a fine Way between them. [*Aſide.*

DEBONAIR.

Grown tired, nay, ſick of the ſatiating Circle of modiſh, or rather intoxicating Life; I am convinced true Happineſs is no where to be found but among *Hymen*'s Votaries, by mutual Inclination.

PROTEA.

Why, Sir FRANKLY, this Declaration to me?

DEBONAIR.

Becauſe I do not know any of your Sex can give the matrimonial State ſo ſanctifying a Dignity.

PROTEA.

What think you, Mrs. COUNSEL? [*Aſide.*

COUNSEL.

That you will be his—— (*to Sir* FRANKLY) Make ſure of her now, Sir FRANKLY: For Reaſons I ſhall tell you hereafter. This is the very Criſis of your Fortune.

DE-

DEBONAIR.

Behold with Eyes of Triumph, your acknowledged Conqueſt; who now courts the Chain he ſo long appeared reluctant to put on.

PROTEA.

Now, Sir FRANKLY, that I have heard you make, with a moſt ſolemn Face, a very ſerious Declaration of Love; you will be ſo kind as to excuſe me, if I cannot help laughing on the Occaſion of this Subject of the laſt Importance. Ha, ha, ha! Will it be believed Abroad, that ſo privileged, ſo ſuperiour a Soul as Sir FRANKLY DEBONAIR's, could become a Whiner in Love! That his great Heart could be penetrated by the weak Arrows of *Cupid!* That his ſtrong Senſe could condeſcend to declare him a Woman's Slave! Ha, ha, ha!

DEBONAIR.

Come, Come, Madam, this is no Time for trifling.—Enough of this Sort of Fooling has paſſed already between us.—Mark well my Words: No Oracle ever pronounced truer.—If you miſs me now, you never more ſhall me ſee.

PROTEA.

What a barbarous Sentence you have pronounced! From the Vehemence of it I begin to think you are ſomewhat in Love. How can I in Return ſhew my Gratitude more than by promiſing to keep your Weakneſs a Secret; for your Reputation's Sake: So you need not apprehend its ſpreading Abroad, if you can keep your own Mind. I dare anſwer for Mrs. COUNSEL's Diſcretion at keeping a Secret.

COUNSEL.

So your Ladyſhip may; but never for more than one at a Time. Therefore, in Order to take this in, I muſt let another out; for my Boſom could never contain two.

PROTEA.

PROTEA.

What can this Riddle mean?

COUNSEL.

That you are as much in Love with Sir FRANKLY, as he can poſſibly be with you; and that were he to depart as he threatened; I ſhould have you on the Inſtant ſwooning in my Arms.

DEBONAIR.

Good COUNSEL, I ſhall reward your Friendſhip.

COUNSEL.

Virtue is its own Reward, Sir. This is an Act of Juſtice. I now feel light as Air, having diſcharged my Conſcience.

PROTEA.

This Stroke of Perfidy I was not prepared for—— and my Confuſion ſtrengthens her Aſſertion.

DEBONAIR.

Well, Madam, I believe I may laugh in my Turn; Ha, ha, ha. My Advice to you is; plead guilty, and throw yourſelf on the Mercy of the Court; we'll keep it ſecret; for your Reputation's Sake. Ha, ha, ha.

PROTEA.

Sure, Sir FRANKLY, you cannot pay Attention to what this impudent Woman has ſaid: It was done to vex me.

DEBONAIR.

Has not ſhe been your conſtant Companion, and faithful Guide from your Infancy? Why thus idly perſevere to oppoſe your Happineſs and mine? (*Kneels*) Deareſt, adored Lady PROTEA, look kindly on him, who, kneeling

ing, ſeals his Marriage Contract on this Bliſs-inſpiring Hand.

PROTEA.

Riſe, Sir FRANKLY. — Marriage Contract!—Hand! You amaze me—COUNSEL?

COUNSEL.

Well, Madam——Why this ſtrange Look? That you have conſented to the one, and given the other, I will prove in all the Courts of Law.———The young Fools of our Sex muſt be always forced to the Happineſs they wiſh for. [*Aſide.*

PROTEA.

Since you, COUNSEL, ſo partially conſpire with Sir FRANKLY againſt me, I muſt ſurrender: but before the Execution of the Contract, entreat a few Days Sacrifice to Decency and Preparation.

DEBONAIR.

Agreed.

PROTEA.

Now all my maiden Fears are over—I am not, in the main, ſo angry with you, COUNSEL, as I affected to be ——For your abrupt Declaration has ſaved me a World of Bluſhing, and round-about Work.

COUNSEL.

It was for that very Reaſon I ſpoke, having been always before-hand with your Deſires.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

My Lady, I fear Murder will be committed in the Garden. The CAPTAIN, with his great Sword drawn, ſwears enough to root up all the Trees. His LORDSHIP dances about as if mad, or enchanted by the hard Words the DOCTOR ſays to him.

PROTEA.

Call the Footmen. (*Exit* SERVANT.) You will go with me, Sir FRANKLY?

DEBONAIR.

By Preference now, ſince Danger is near your Ladyſhip.

PROTEA.

Come, let us not loſe a Moment. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to the Garden.*

BROADSIDE, MATHO, *and* STRAINWIT, *their Swords drawn.*

BROADSIDE.

Why do not you ſtand your Ground? Do you think I have nothing elſe to do but to run after you, you Land-Fly?

STRAINWIT.

Get a proper Weapon, and I am your Man.——My ſlender Blade is no Match for your butcherly Cleaver of Humanity.

MATHO.

To fight is ſavage.---This abominable Cuſtom of Duelling, unknown among the *Greeks* and *Romans* hath ſprung up in *Europe* but ſince the Declenſion of the *Roman* Empire, and Extinction of polite Literature. It had it's Riſe among Barbarians, who in Proportion as they were defective of Reaſon, decided all their Diſputes with Blows, and other Acts of Hoſtility.

BROADSIDE.

What you ſay, DOCTOR, may be very true, and very right; but is nothing at all to my preſent Purpoſe —— Therefore I tell you, run-away Raſcal, if I once board you, I will

will faſten you on a Barrel of Gun-powder, put Fire to it, and ſend you ſkipping in the Air with other painted Vapours.

STRAINWIT.

O terrible Monſter of the Deep!

MATHO.

I think, CAPTAIN, it would have been a prettier Image, and ſavour more of Antiquity and the Claſſicks, if you had ſaid——

Add a new ſprawling Monſter to the Sky.

BROADSIDE.

Damn Antiquity and the Claſſicks, Why do you talk to me of them?

STRAINWIT.

What ſays *Noſtradamus* from *Terra auſtralis incognita?*

MATHO.

Is this your Gratitude, for having, by my Entreaties, hindered the CAPTAIN from making *conic Sections* of your Body?

BROADSIDE.

I leave the Popinjay to you, DOCTOR. I believe you are more than a Match for him. I would undertake to fight Twenty of thoſe dancing Sparks; but have not Talk for one of them.

STRAINWIT.

Since, DOCTOR, you are ſo fond of traducing me into a ridiculous Image, what could be more ſo than your interfering between the CAPTAIN and me? Your curtailed *Verdi-griſe* Skewer of a Sword, joined to his Mower of Mankind, was like a Dwarf bearing a Court Lady's Train, or a Comma tacked to a long Phraſe.

MATHO.

It was more than a Semicolon; nay a Full-ſtop for thy worthleſs Life.

Enter DEBONAIR, PROTEA, COUNSEL, *&c.*

PROTEA.

Gentlemen, What is the Reaſon of this Quarrel?

MATHO.

There never was, is, or can be *Reaſon* for a Quarrel; they are incompatible: cannot exiſt together.

PROTEA.

I command the Peace.

BROADSIDE, MATHO, and STRAINWIT.

We obey. [*They put up their Swords*

DEBONAIR.

The Cauſe I have heard, Gentlemen, ſhould on both Sides have rather provoked your Laughter, than Indignation.

MATHO.

So I repeatedly told them; but to no Purpoſe.

PROTEA.

Doctor MATHO, your Coat has ſuffered in the Scuffle. If you pleaſe, I will order one of my Servants to——

MATHO.

No, thank your Ladyſhip; O for AJAX's ſeven-fold Shield! How wiſe was the antient Cuſtom of Armour, in Combat!——Madam, I have a female Servant at Home, Native of *Syracuſe*, who contracts all Chaſms in my Habiliments with *Attic* Needles, and with *Roman* Silk.

PROTEA.

Servants withdraw. (*Ex. Servants.*) Now, Gentlemen Lovers, as you have been pleaſed to ſtyle your-

ſelves,

ſelves, receive in Publick the Anſwer deſigned for each of you in private.

[BROADSIDE, MATHO, *and* STRAINWIT, *ſtare on each other.*

BROADSIDE.

If any Regard be paid to Valour; and the Sex, they ſay, loves Courage: her Choice muſt certainly fall on me.

PROTEA.

Captain BROADSIDE.

BROADSIDE.

It is juſt as I gueſſed; ſhe declares for me already.——There is not a Man in the Navy walks a Quarter-Deck better than I do.

PROTEA.

As I ſhall never endure to be ſeparated from my Huſband, and have a mortal Averſion to the Sea, you muſt naturally conclude an Impoſſibility of our joining in Wedlock.

BROADSIDE.

Every one to their Liking, ſay I.——Altho' contrary to me, I ſhould be glad to know, ere I part, in whoſe Favour the Wind may blow.

STRAINWIT.

Unleſs ſhe had been pre-judged to Brutality with BROADSIDE, or Dulneſs with MATHO, her Paſſion muſt have been, and is doubtleſs for me.——I ſee her coming——pretty Creature! How theſe diſappointed poor Devils will fret.

PROTEA.

My Lord.

STRAINWIT.

My Lady.——To ſave your Confuſion before Company, I take your Hand by way of Supplement for what elſe you would ſay.

PROTEA.

PROTEA.

Preſumptuous *Phaeton*, thus I daſh thee from thy Pinnacle of Vanity. Know, thou art the Object of my Contempt. Before you can expect that any of the rational Females will join with ſuch as you; learn to love yourſelves leſs, them more; and to barter your Tinſel Wit for a little ſolid Senſe.

STRAINWIT.

Say you ſo, Madam? In return I commiſſion you to proclaim to your Sex, that I renounce All Thoughts of Connecting with any of them; will forthwith court the chaſte Muſes only. So you, and your Sex, may pine, deſpair, and be——buried as faſt as you pleaſe.

PROTEA.

Notwithſtanding this cruel Declaration I hope you will be ſo kind as to ſend us your Works.

STRAINWIT.

Were you, or your Sex, endowed with Intellects capable of reliſhing them, I might. For my Works are all Squibs of Wit, that exploſive flame, flaming ſoar, and ſoaring draw all Eyes to gaze on the ſtarry Progeny, that ſpangle the Hemiſphere of the *Beaux Eſprits*.———Madam, your Servant——From this Moment, dear *Parnaſſus*, I am eternally yours. *(Going.)* But to puniſh her I will ſtay, and ſee who is to be, *The Lady's Choice*.

BROADSIDE.

I am reconciled to my Refuſal, ſince that gewgaw Thing, that dancing Pratler, is caſhiered.——Hark-you, Spark, now you are anſwered, fall abaft. Do not deſpair. ———Although your Hopes be wrecked here, come on board with me; I will make you a Midſhipman, and ſo train you to be of ſome Service to your Country.

MATHO.

Things go as they ought to do. A falſe Reliſh for the Moderns may uſurp for a while.——But the true Taſte of

of Antiquity makes Proſelytes at laſt, as of Lady PROTEA to me.

PROTEA.

Doctor MATHO.

MATHO.

Madam.——The moſt devoted of your ſublunary Admirers preſumes, from the *Nadir* of his Demerit, to aſpire to the *Zenith* of your beautiful Perfections; to form therein a ſocial Conſtellation.

PROTEA.

To put an End to all your Hopes, I declare a Partiality for the *Moderns* againſt the *Antients*, and that I chuſe to move and act in a ſomewhat humbler than the Starry Sphere.

MATHO.

Then ſink under the Preſſure of Gravitation, and be confounded with Terreſtreity.

BROADSIDE.

Hip——DOCTOR——We three hang a-ſtern here.

STRAINWIT.

Now DOCTOR, to comfort yourſelf diſcover the Longitude, and ſquare a Circle.

COUNSEL.

Do that, ſublime DOCTOR, and I am at your Diſcretion; then you will be poſſeſſed of a large Premium.

MATHO.

Inſolent Triflers. Here ends my Courtſhip to you, Madam.——I for ever deflect the Tangent of my Deſires from ſo eccentrical a Zone of erratic Pudicity.——But, dear Antiquity, Philoſophy, Aſtronony, and you, O Matheſis, I am ſtill, and ſhall perſevere, your ever faithful Aggregate, and conſtant Worſhipper, ANTI-MODERNUS MATHO.

BROAD-

BROADSIDE.

Give my thy Hand, Brother in Misfortune.——Yon ſilent Gentleman (ſmooth Water runs deep) I ſee is, *The Lady's Choice.* Since we have loſt her, let us neither envy nor repine at another's good Fortune.

COUNSEL.

There being no longer Occaſion for you three Gentlemen here; you may go as ſoon as you pleaſe.

BROADSIDE.

Enough ſaid.——I lead the Van. Let us to the Tavern; there waſh away Sorrow with good old *Hock:* and at every Round, give a Cheer for Succeſs to his Majeſty's Navy. [*Exit.*

STRAINWIT.

Man of Learning ſucceed as a Cooler between that Man of Fire and me.

MATHO.

Oi moi.——O Tempora! O Mores! [*Exit*

STRAINWIT.

Is this juſt Dealing, Gods? [*Exit.*

DEBONAIR.

Your Ladyſhip has given their Diſmiſſion to a Trio, who ſeem endowed with moſt extraordinary Qualifications.

PROTEA.

You, Sir, are their happy Contraſt, having what is valuable in each, without the Allay. The one has Courage without Politeneſs; the other Wit without Judgment: and the third Learning without Taſte.

DEBONAIR.

Let us quit ſo diſagreeable for more pleaſing Subjects.

PROTEA.

PROTEA.

Dear COUNSEL, I have ſtill ſome Appprehenſions.

COUNSEL.

Fancy all, Madam; I cannot ſee any Cauſe.

PROTEA.

I do.

COUNSEL.

Where?

PROTEA.

In the ſarcaſtic Comments.

COUNSEL.

Of whom?

PROTEA.

Of pert Deſcanters on this ſudden Reſolution.

COUNSEL.

Here is your Apology; refer them to Sir FRANKLY.

DEBONAIR.

I am of COUNSEL's Opinion; let them be referred to me, whoſe chief Study it will be, that Lady PROTEA for m rimonial, tho' (in our depraved and mercenary Times) not very faſhionable Happineſs, ſhall be envied by her Sex.

PROTEA.

And in grateful Return my chief Care ſhall be, to deſerve ſtill more and more ſuch kind and generous Indulgence.

Learn hence, in Wedlock who would happy prove;
Eſteem muſt be the Harbinger of *Love*.

FINIS.

EPILOGUE.

By Mrs. GREEN.

ANON will be the Criticks' busy Hour,
When from this House they to the Bedford *pour;*
A dreadful Legion to new-acted Pieces!
ASPER *begins, who ev'ry Author fleeces;*
Calls on BUFFONE *'mongst the gaping Crowd,*
In damning all Things new, pert, shrill, and loud.
Well—— Eh—— have you been at the Show next Door?
Yes; Heav'n forgive me:— I ne'er saw so poor,
So vile a Thing—— I don't know what it means.
How lamely after Wit the Creature strains!
Such Bards! how fall'n the Stage! Ho; can you tell,
Who is; whence comes he?—— Yes; I know him well:
Would have new-form'd his Piece, for Friendship's Sake,
Had he consulted me.—— How Folks mistake
Their Talents!—— He has some Taste, Reading, Sense;
But to Stage-writing not the least Pretence:
Yet, that my Friend's not ignorant, a Fact is.——
He may know Theory; *but damn his* Practice.
Replies BUFFONE,—— ASPER, *with a Leer,*
Assents, and chuckling to his lov'd Compeer.
With Shrug significant, and cunning Sneer
Rejoins;— Why, I've wrote Plays; nay, to the Fellows
Shew'd them; the Managers:—— but they are jealous
Of ev'ry Man above their own dull Level,
And only to congenial Dunces civil.
What think you was their Answer, entre nous?
We've read your Plays, Sir; take them, they won't do.
And yet, by Heav'n, with Style, Plot, Spirit, Thought,
No English *Dramas are so richly fraught.*
They'd do our Nation Honour, cross the Seas,
Outshine the French, *old* Rome, *and elder* Greece.
But that avail'd not with a tasteless Mind:
Lay Pearls 'fore Swine, shew Pictures to the Blind.
For my Part, I renounce—— farewell the Scene,
Producing Naught but what provokes my Spleen.
Nor on the Praise extravagant of Friends,
Or Party's blind Cabals true Fame depends;
What gives to Crowds unprejudic'd Delight:
In Spite of whiffling Cavillers, is right.——
O let us hope that is our Luck To-night.

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